

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-12

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TO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 198173

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:MY, PEPR

SUBJECT: MALAYSIAN FONMIN RITHAUDDEEN - UNDER SECRETARY
NEWSOM

1. ASEAN. GOM FONMIN SAW UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM AUG. 2
PRIMARILY TO OUTLINE GOM VIEWS ON IMMINENT US-ASEAN DIA-
LOGUE. HE STRESSED THAT "SURVIVAL" OF ASEAN "DEMOCRATIC
POLITICAL SYSTEMS AND FREE-ENTERPRISE ECONOMIES" IS DEPEN-
DENT ON THE SUPPORT AND RELATIONS WITH DEVELOPED COUNTRIES.
"INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVELY", ASEAN MUST BE ECONOMICALLY
STRONG IF IT IS TO WITHSTAND THE "ONSLAUGHT OF ANY SUBVER-
SION". HE BRIEFLY REVIEWED GOM "HOPES" THAT "SOME KIND OF
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UNDERSTANDING" COULD BE REACHED ON SUCH ISSUES AS COMMON
FUND, STABEX, MTN AND HE COMMENTED ON INADEQUACY OF IMF
COMPENSATORY FINANCING FACILITY. HE CITED IMPORTANCE
ASEAN'S POPULATTON, RESOURCES, STRATEGIC LOCATION AND TRADE
PATTERNS, DC-LDC INTER-DEPENDENCE, AND THAT ASEAN
"CANNOT DO IT ALL ALONE". THUS, THE U.S., AS A MAJOR
TRADING PARTNER, SHOULD ASSIST THE ASEAN STATES TO BE "LESS

PRONE TO INTIMIDATION".

2. UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM NOTED OUR RECOGNITION OF ASEAN IMPORTANCE AND DYNAMISM AND THAT CURRENT MEETING IS STRUCTURED TO BRING THESE FACTS TO ATTENTION US DECISION-MAKERS, CONGRESS, PUBLIC AND MEDIA. HE CITED IRONY THAT DIRE PREDICTIONS OF DOOM FOR ASEAN AFTER FALL OF SAIGON NOW REPLACED BY ASEAN PROGRESS AND INDOCHINA WARS. THE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY HAVE EACH EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR OUR RELATIONS WITH ASEAN. AT SAME TIME, ASEAN LEADERS THIS WEEK WILL HAVE FIRST-HAND OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE THE LIMITATIONS ON OUR FREEDOM TO RESPOND FULLY TO ASEAN CONCERNS. ADMINISTRATION HAS ATTEMPTED AS A BASIC POLICY TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THIRD WORLD VIA TRADE, AID AND COMMODITIES. UNFORTUNATELY, SUCCESS HAS BEEN HAMPERED BY COINCIDENT RISE OF PROTECTIONISM, LABOR AND TAX POLICY CONCERNS. PROGRESS IS AN "UPHILL BATTLE" BUT POSITIVE RESULTS EXIST.

3. FONMIN NOTED IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUING CLOSE CONSULTATION STATING THAT US AND ASEAN MUST "NOT BE ALOOF". REFERRING INDIRECTLY TO POLITICAL AFFAIRS, HE COMMENTED THAT OUR ECONOMIC DISCUSSIONS WOULD BE ENCOMPASSED WITHIN AN EXCHANGE OF GENERAL VIEWS WHICH WOULD SERVE AS "GUIDELINES".

4. UNDER SECY NOTED RISE OF ASEAN CONSCIOUSNESS AND DAS
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OAKLEY NOTED THAT SEPARATE CONTINUING MEETINGS WOULD BE HELD ON SOME TOPICS SUCH AS THE COMMON FUND.

5. OTHER TOPICS

A. NAM (BELGRADE) - FONMIN NOTED THAT RADICAL NAM FORCES HAD BEEN "CHECKED" BY MODERATES AND A RELIANCE UPON MAINTAINING CREDIBILITY FOR THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF NON-ALIGNMENT. TITO'S SPEECH HAD BEEN IMPRESSIVE EVEN RECOGNIZING THAT NON-ALIGNMENT SERVES AS A YUGOSLAV COUNTERBALANCE TO OTHER PRESSURES. IN RESPONSE QUESTIONS, FONMIN REPLIED MODERATE REPS DID NOT FEEL THEY SHOULD OVERTURN PREVIOUS SUMMIT DECISION TO HOLD NEXT SUMMIT AT HAVANA. HE ALSO BELIEVED PERSONALLY IT WOULD BE UNWISE FOR MODERATE LEADERS TO BOYCOTT THE HAVANA SUMMIT.

B. INDOCHINA - FONMIN WAS SKEPTICAL OVER SRV PROMOTION OF ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM, INDEPENDENCE AND NEUTRALITY INCLUDING UNCERTAINTY WHETHER SRV WOULD QUALIFY "INDEPENDENCE" AS "GENUINE". HOWEVER, ASEAN WAS A VEHICLE FOR DISCUSSION AND THEY WERE WILLING TO LISTEN TO WHAT SRV HAD TO SAY. UNDER SECY NEWSOM NOTED SRV WAS ALSO SENDING POSITIVE

SIGNALS TO US, BUT OUR RESPONSE WOULD BE "JUDICIOUS".

C. US-GOM RELATIONS - FONMIN CLOSED BY COMPLIMENTING
AMB. MILLER AND EMBASSY KL FOR THEIR "CLOSE COOPERATION"
AND RESPONSIVENESS. CHRISTOPHER

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